

COMPANY K, AFTER A MOST ACTIVE YEAR IN UNITED STATES BORDER SERVICE, FINISHES



After Many Vicissitudes in Guarding Border, Company From El Paso Is Being Mustered Out to Return Home; Something of the Personnel of the Company; Some Fond Recollections.

By JOHN H. REGAN.

COMPANY "K," 4th Texas infantry, has completed its "bit" upon the border, is now being mustered out of the federal service and those members of the organization who were El Paso men will soon return to El Paso.

The company left El Paso on the night of May 17, 1916, in response to the president's call of May 9, 1916, and upon returning to the mobilization camp at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, was mustered into the federal service on May 17, 1916.

The company left with the fourth Texas infantry for the Big Bend district on May 27, 1916, arriving at Marathon, Texas, on May 28. On May 30, 1916, company K left Marathon via trucks for Terlingua, Texas, arriving at the quicksilver mining camp on the morning of May 31, 1916. On July 2, 1916, a detachment of K company under Lieut. Wellwood C. Elliott left for La Jitas. The company was brought together at La Jitas on July 25, 1916.

On September 8, 1916, the company left La Jitas for Alpine, Texas, arriving at Alpine on September 9, 1916. A detachment of K company left Alpine for Marfa on September 15, 1916, under second Lieut. W. C. Gove, where the detachment remained until orders were received to move to San Antonio. The company was united again at San Antonio, where it went in for a period of intensive training. On Tuesday, March 6, 1917, company K was informed that an order had been issued to muster the company out. The order was received with enthusiasm by the men.

Making for Breeds. Detachment life makes for breeds—light and dark, ideal and sophisticated. That was one of the things we experienced early. If a group got under an elemental chap like Lieut. Elliott, who was akin to the mountain and the winds who dared anything because it had the charm of risk, it was hard to rebound to the casual and well ordered life of routine. When the Marfa detachment, in many respects an echo of the first La

Jitas detachment, loomed up as a bunch of motherless cub-eating with company M, and half the time without an officer, they began to differ from the smooth placed life of the Alpine detachment. In Marfa they chased prisoners—most seriously and humorously—over hill and down into valleys, to woodpile and latrine, to stable and to kitchen. Here they walked around hayrides with a weary manner and a quartermaster building, even more so. It was one alternative or the other every two weeks.

Never Awful Wicked. We grew dusky and dark—had our wickedness, was never awful, nor wickedness nor terrible. When I—can a drunken Mexican through with a bayonet he did it cheerfully. There was no malice or forethought. When I—tried to plug M—it was just a nice little affair. There was never any viciousness about what we did at Marfa—just the playful riffs of a solar bear. Riff—and there you were. Cursing was mild, "promoting" was wild, "everything was mild compared to the capacity for gold bricking. At—ways shall we look back thankful for such artfulness, such subtlety and cunning; such adroitness and such finesse. The energy used in simulating a maul could easily have been used in cutting the cords of wood and strumming the 1880 day piles. But there was a charm about staking you with against the doctor and winning.

"Gold Bricking" Out. A certain group gold bricked out one by one. There was W. H. Giddens, Joe Miller, Hal Barcliffe, Walter Jones, Warren and James Marshall, Oswald Olson, H. W. McFee, John Norington, Charles Cullen, Roscoe V. Everidge, Lloyd V. Davis, Brax Friend, W. Greenwood, Charles W. Lamb, Stewart C. Lusk, Robert R. McArthur, D. L. Muckleroy, Barron Vaughn—all El Paso men.

And those who did not return home

PHOTOGRAPH of "El Paso's Own," company K, Fourth Texas infantry, taken at Camp Wilson, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Not all of the members are present, many being absent at the time on detached service or special duty. The names of the men, reading left to right are:

Standing—Sgt. Louis T. Boyle, musician Allen C. Jones, musician Hamilton Baker, 1st Sgt. Jesse E. Manigold, Pvt. Hamilton G. Elliott, Pvt. Ira C. Vanderlinden, Corp. Robert E. Neff, Pvt. Raymond McDowell, Pvt. Marion Pryor, Capt. Walter E. Jenkins, 1st Lieut. Wellwood C. Elliott, Pvt. Lyndon G. McLaughlin, Pvt. James M. Kelsey, Pvt. Curtis Sanders, Pvt. Barlow B. Morris, Pvt. J. T. Edwards, Pvt. Rex Burns, Pvt. Edwin M. Lindsey, Pvt. George Willan, Pvt. Francis E. Quisick, Pvt. Carl Jones, Pvt. Paul D. Finkle, Pvt. John H. Regan, Pvt. Jean Gottardi.

Kneeling—Supply Sgt. George Reviere, Sgt. Sidney Wharton, Pvt. Willie O. Farley, Pvt. J. E. Burns, Pvt. John C. Counts, Pvt. Amos Marshall, Pvt. Gilbert E. Newson, Pvt. James J. Gowan, Corp. Frank Ross, Corp. Henry Cline, Corp. Louis B. Randolph, Pvt. Robert I. Wright, Pvt. Neptahly Lynch, Pvt. Grady Cartet, Corp. Lester Harley, Pvt. Bill McArthur, Pvt. George Gray, Pvt. Kinzie Feathers, Corp. Jerome Gerlach, Pvt. Steve Huddleston, Pvt. James Dameron, Pvt. Sam Ventura, Corp. Will R. Proffore.

Into Military Department.

Grad school was not a bad thing, as did also Fredrick Ottaway, of Lyons, N. Y. Ottaway came all the way from California to be a member of K, then he went all the way to New York to get his freedom. Bob Potter worked a quill and got over to the hand, then they made him a corporal and company clerk for the headquarters company. Jack Murray was swallowed up by the supply company, because he understood horses and mules and had a disposition like a donkey—mild mannered and congenial, but not always easy to move.

Jim Reed, an El Paso boy, got over to the hand on a bluff that he had once played alto. Luck was with him, as the hand instruments never arrived. Lea Evans lost his "letter" with the flock after Alpine's attempt to fold over on Marfa, and went down to the district quartermaster on detached service, where he did some work and a great deal of correspondence. John Regan followed in the wake of Bob Potter, when Potter left for Dallas on recruiting duty, and became affixed to headquarters. Later he was assigned to the S. C. D. detachment where, under Lieut. Bondert, he wrote many S. C. D. dispatches.

Leaving the Company.

Other men who came out from El Paso to transfer within the regiment were: Harry Gray, who went to the supply company; Wilford P. Burnham, who transferred to the medical department; Roy L. Carlin, who went to company H; Jack C. Parker and H. H. Hall, who became affixed to the supply company; Joseph E. Pierce, who went over to the hand section of headquarters company.

As self appointed historian, I can-

not believe that K company deserves a vaudeville. I have been frequently convinced that "K" needed not a vaudeville nor laurels, but I did, I did, and other high explosives. Often when stretched to do an elegy upon them I have ended by wishing that there was a periscope in camp to discover who put the blanket or mess kit or opened the locker and took all the beans.

Wicked, the Marfa crowd was not. They were deficient, perhaps, on property. They were more deep set than wicked. It was fun to watch them drinking up booze lifted from box cars temporarily delayed in dry territory. No, they didn't steal. It was a finer touch than mere larceny. It was more like light fingering—with the technique and dexterity of a boulevard shoplifter. We called it "promoting."

Four Who Deserted.

We were possessed of humor and originality. When one man deserted, it was in an interesting way. He collected upwards of \$100 to invest in booze at Marathon. This was while we were at La Jitas. He was to travel some 100 miles for the refreshments, by way of trucks. He never returned. And when another left, it was at a time he could be useful. True, the usefulness was to the prisoners he guarded. He carried a number with him, but it was an interesting getaway. He left behind a note, which was in substance:

"I shall miss the fellows. If you want me real bad just look me up at Corrienna. Life here is too dull. I told the prisoners not to come along, as it would be bad with them if caught—but some of them were pig-headed. Best wishes."

Then there was still another. How sweetly he strung the field Y. M. C. A. with his subtle ways. Then he departed—left in a single night, after

selling his government property and a lien on his next month's salary. There too, all kindnesses to him, was a fourth, well beloved of his mother. He wrote him sympathetic letters. He grew restive with repeated confinements in the guardhouse and one night, after cleaning our chief bootlegger of \$24, left like the Arabs. You know the business of silently sailing away. There four all responded to the president's call on May 10 and came to San Antonio with K company.

The several desertions were trivial when compared to the finesse of the beer holdup at La Jitas, when nearly 500 bottles of the amber fluid, warm and tepid, flowed into the stomachs of our beer hungry selves. All this consumption occurred while the Mexican bootleggers, under a military escort, were bootfooting it across the country, a much perturbed lot.

Typical of El Paso.

K company was typical of El Paso. It was unique. It reflected cosmopolitan things—world things too. There was amongst us a major from the Villa army; a droll fellow who always took himself seriously; a former filibuster with the Orozco band; who regarded insurrections and revolutions as the apex of life; then there was that argot chap with the "snow bird" habits and given to "rein-deering." I do not remember his name. He served a hitch with various of the Mexican revolutionaries, and regarded life with the same nonchalance that he pretended he did death.

There were many soldiers of fortune; corporal Lawson, for instance, whose uncle, the minister of militia of Canada, Sir James Hughes, ended a correspondence because the nephew cast his lot in with the states rather than with the Canadians.

K company responded to the president's call at what seemed a national emergency. We left El Paso with three officers and 97 men. Of this number 56 enlisted at the call of the

president, making the actual strength of the company when the call was received 47 men.

When the company was subjected to the examining board at Ft. Sam Houston, prior to departure for the Big Bend district, some 10 of the men were rejected. That left 37 available men, if we were to remain permanently in the field. The disabilities of many of the others were later removed.

Men Lost Rapidly.

After the company had been but eight months, of the old and new men to be lost through expiration of term of enlistment, transfers and other causes, the total of losses mounted to 58. To the company, while stationed at Terlingua and La Jitas, were added 28 recruits, three of this number being later transferred to company M. One of the recruits was lost through deser-

tion and still another through physical disqualification. The names of the recruits to company K, and who for ten months bore the banner of El Paso, are:

Fred Reck, James P. Thompson and Joe F. Blakely, now of company M; Wm. G. Lawless, J. E. Burns, Rex Burns, Grady L. Carter, James Dameron, Jason Emmett, Willie O. Farley, James J. Gowan, George W. Gray, Neptahly H. Lynch, Amos B. Marshall, Lyndon G. McLaughlin, Ira C. Vanderlinden, Guyon J. Davis, George Clarke (lost on S. C. D.), William Reed, James D. Ferguson, James M. Kelsey, Edwin M. Lindsey, Jim H. Richardson, Alexander L. Roberts, Curtis Sanders and Robert L. Wright.

In the selection of men commissioned (Continued on Last Page.)



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